

horned passalus beetle *Odontotaenius disjunctus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Insecta

Order: Coleoptera

Family: Passalidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The horned passalus beetle is also known as a Bess beetle, Bess bug, Betsy beetle, patent leather beetle or peg beetle. It ranges in size from about an inch and one-fourth to an inch and one-half. Its body is elongated, and the elytra (hard wing covers) have distinct striations. Larvae have two pairs of normal legs and one pair (the hind one) that are shorter.

BEHAVIORS

The species can be found throughout the year in rotting logs where it lives in small colonies. It feeds on rotting wood and fungi. The larvae are cared for by adults of both sexes. The larvae eat rotting wood pre-chewed by adults and may eat the feces of adults as well. Adults are sometimes found at lights. Both adults and larvae make sounds by rubbing body parts together, serving as a means of communication between them.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

edge

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